

SECOND PHASE OF WSIS, 16-18 NOVEMBER, TUNIS

**STATEMENT BY H. E PROF. MARK. J. MWANDOSYA,
MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT AND
HEAD OF DELEGATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA
17 NOVEMBER 2005**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations,
Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary General of the ITU,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Mr. President,

It is a great honour for me to address this August Assembly on behalf of the United Republic of Tanzania. Allow me to convey the felicitations of His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa, President of the United Republic of Tanzania who could not be with us here today. He has mandated me to express his and Tanzania's full support to the Development Process of the World Summit on the Information Society.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the United Nations, and Mr. Yoshio Utsumi, the Secretary General of ITU for the successful implementation of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution of holding and expediting in phases, this historical event, the World Summit on Information Society, of which we all have a stake in.

Mr. President,

The first Phase of WSIS, held in Geneva in December 2003 approved WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action for implementation by all stakeholders. The Plan of Action recognises the need for enhancing the process of building up a well-informed society in order to foster global, regional and national development through optimal use of Information and Communications Technologies – ICTs as a facilitator.

Mr. President,

The World Summit on the Information Society has been arranged by the United Nations System. It is indeed a success story of multilateralism. For that success to be recognised and sustained, we see a strong rationale for the United Nations System to have a central and pivotal role in the follow up to the post summit in coordinating the implementation of the declarations, plans and commitments arising from the Summit. Public policy issues arising out of the growth of the information revolution are the domain of and fall within the purview of governments. The multi-stakeholder nature of the enterprise, is such that the non governmental sector can play a useful role in this endeavour. A Public Private Sector Partnership that will inevitably arise out of the Summit could be a pace setter in many global and national endeavours.

Mr. President,

In the course of implementation there have been some notable achievements as well as challenges, with most of the latter being experienced in developing countries, including Tanzania. These include inadequate infrastructure, high cost to access ICT facilities and lack of relevant local content. In this regard, the issue of Internet Governance, relevant content, information flow, and connectivity between and within African countries and the rest of the World are important. It needs a collective and multilateral effort to address issues of internet security and combating cyber crime, terrorism, and many others.

Mr. President,

The Digital Solidarity Fund is an African initiative, brainchild of His Excellency Abdoulaye Wade. We applaud its establishment, the voluntary nature of it notwithstanding. We confirm that Tanzania shall contribute and we urge those who can contribute generously to the fund which would go a long way to change the "digital divide" into a digital solidarity. For, there is a clear benefit to and it is in the self interest of developed nations and institutions to have information and knowledge underpin the development of developing countries.

Mr. President,

Tanzania has initiated and continues to implement various programmes as part of the process of building an Information Society. These programmes are in the areas of local content development, e-health, e-agriculture, e-post, e-business, e-commerce, e-government and e-education linking secondary schools, universities and teachers training colleges. We have an Integrated Financial Management and Accounting and a Centralized Human Resource/Payroll Management systems that links all Ministries and Local Governments to the Ministry of Finance.

Tanzania is also spearheading the localisation of the key open source applications and operating Systems into Kiswahili. This has resulted in what are referred to as the Jambo Open Office, and Klinux for word processing, and websurfing, respectively. These efforts should lead to inclusive access and enhancement of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the information society.

We are finalizing the establishment of institutional arrangements for the management of our country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) to be launched by January 2006. On the other hand Tanzania has established an Internet Exchange Point (IXP) and is planning to install four more IXPs.

We are committed to the realisation of the East African Submarine Cable Project (EASSy), which will create connectivity possibilities to countries in Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa. Tanzania has embarked on the establishment of a National ICT optic fiber backbone network starting with the rationalisation and full utilization of the excess transmission capacities of our transport, electricity, and natural gas companies.

A new technology-neutral, service-neutral and convergence framework for the licensing of operators has been introduced by the regulator. In realisation of these programmes, we welcome investment and encourage a strong multi-stakeholder partnership among the Government, Private Sector, Development Partners, the Civil Society, and the People.

Mr. President,

Tunisia is an African country. The symbolism of Africa hosting the Summit should not be missed. For, it is in assessing the performance of Africa that the World will know whether its global information revolution has succeeded or not. Tunisia has provided a magnificent setting for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. I would like to thank His Excellency Ben Ali Zine El Abidine the President of Tunisia, the government and the people of Tunisia for their generosity and efficient arrangements.

Once again, the United Republic of Tanzania commits itself to implement the decisions of this Summit.

I thank you for your attention.